



From Rachael Campey, Chief Executive

It was refreshing to get a clear, factual account of the UK Commission for Employment & Skills' new role and focus at the first FEdS seminar of the autumn.

Michael Davis, UKCES chief executive, was our guest speaker at the seminar, which was generously hosted by FEdS' member City & Guilds. With the party political conference season in full swing, the chance to hear an economist's overview on what is needed to inspire and encourage skills investment was a much needed antidote to conference sound bites. My blog on the FEdS website says more on this. Our next seminar - on apprenticeships - is on 3 November.

It is interesting that just as the Conservative conference in Manchester closes this week, WorldSkills London 2011 gets underway at ExCel. It is the world's largest international skills competition with young people from across the globe competing to be 'the best of the best' in their chosen skill.

I wonder how many of these young people are inspired by what they hear from business and political leaders. I fear not many at all, and that's where the debate on the economy and skills is letting them down. It lacks both inspiration and motivation - qualities we don't get from conference speeches, sadly. However, I am hoping WorldSkills, where the people in suits get to meet 'tomorrow's workforce', will prove more inspirational. The event is all about showcasing young people's talent - something we should do more to celebrate in this country.

That's why I am going to WorldSkills straight after the Conservative conference. I don't know about you but after hearing about how politicians see our future, I'd just like to see it through young people's eyes. I hope to see you there.

Rachael's regular blogs can be found at: www.feds.co.uk

Transforming skills investment and ambition

A seminar with Michael Davis, Chief Executive, UK Commission for Employment & Skills

Wednesday 28 September

FEdS members were treated to a very clear, economist's explanation of the new UKCES remit and how it will be supporting the coalition government's approach to investing in skills.

A powerful and active group of Commissioners - ably led by Charlie Mayfield, Chairman of the John Lewis Partnership - unites around a common ambition large employers, SMEs, further and higher education, the voluntary sector, the trade unions and the devolved administrations. They are all seeking to create a single market for vocational skills that will drive growth and create new opportunities, particularly for young people and the unemployed.

The aim will be to invest in solutions developed by employers and learners, rather than by central government, thereby maximising the leverage of limited public funding.

A FEdS paper on the seminar will be circulated to members shortly, and will be available in the members' area of the website.

Forthcoming FEdS events

**Thursday, 3 November,
Pearsons, London WC2**

A seminar with David Smale, head of employer accounts for London and the south-east at the *National Apprenticeship Service*.

David will lead a debate on the practical issues around apprenticeships.

**Thursday, 8 December,
Central London**

A seminar with David Cragg, deputy chair of *WorldSkills 2011* and national director of development at the Skills Funding Agency.

David will discuss the legacy of WorldSkills and how it might showcase all that's best in UK vocational training in the years to come.

FEdS members will shortly receive invitations to both of these events. Details will also be available on our website.

These events are free to FEdS members.

**Wednesday 30 November
18.00-20.30
Royal Scots Club, Edinburgh**

FEdS is one of 17 professional organisations, including FEdS member the Chartered Insurance Institute, organising *Networking with Confidence*.

The speaker will be Fraser Murray of Rock the Boat Consulting.

The fee is £17.50 inc VAT. Booking information is available on our website, or contact angela.gardner@lineone.net for more information.

Connect. Collaborate. Make a difference.

New challenges, new choices

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills has published a consultation on further reforms to the further education sector, implementing its skills strategy of November 2010.

The consultation covers:

- A new landscape for FE offering new organisational and business models;
- Loans for learners over 24 studying at levels 3 and 4;
- New freedoms and flexibilities for providers, and a simplified funding system;
- Plans to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- Delivering higher education and skills;
- A review of Informal Adult & Community Learning.

A full briefing paper is available to members on the FEEdS website.

Post-16 education reform for Scotland

Education Secretary Mike Russell has set out the Scottish Government's post-16 education ambitions in a 75-page report, [Putting Learners at the Centre](#).

This pre-legislative paper contains proposals involving the both the further and higher education sectors. Key reforms include mergers, collaborations and modernisation, with the words 'sustainable', 'affordable' and 'high quality' featuring throughout. The Scottish Government is seeking responses to the report's 33 consultation questions by 23 December.

A FEEdS' Briefing Paper on the review will be circulated to members and will be available in the members' area of the website.

Careers events

In November, **Prospects** is hosting the biggest series of skills, career and training events aimed at S4-6 students across Scotland.

'Skills Scotland' is run in partnership with organisations including FEEdS members the **Scottish Government** and **Education Scotland**. See www.skillsscotland.co.uk for more information or to find out how to get involved.

Prospects is also organising three **National Career Guidance Shows** in London, Leeds and Edinburgh in February and March 2012, in conjunction with the Institute of Career Guidance. www.nationalcareerguidanceshow.com.

News...news...news...news...news...news...news...news...

- Speaking at the Lib Dem party conference, Children & Families Minister Sarah Teather has announced that funding for the Pupil Premium will double to £1.25bn in 2012-13.
- A [report](#) by FEEdS member EdComs for the Institute of Physics suggests the relationship between maths and the physical sciences has been weakened by exams and narrow specialisation.
- The Scottish Government's teacher employment review, chaired by Prof Gerry McCormac of Stirling University, has published its report: [Advancing Professionalism in Teaching](#). The government is considering the report's 34 recommendations before deciding on implementation. Though broadly welcomed by government and key bodies, teachers have concerns about some aspects.

These stories and more will feature in the next FEEdS UK Briefing and Scotland Briefing, due early October.

Members' News

The Department for Education's consultation on qualifications for 14-16 year-olds closed on 30 September. You can read the **National Open College Network's** submission [here](#).

The consultation arose from Alison Wolf's recommendation that the DfE should distinguish clearly between those qualifications that can contribute to performance indicators at Key Stage 4 and those that can't.

The **Chartered Insurance Institute** has published its latest [Skills Report](#).

The shortage of technical skills in general insurance is at a 5-year high with more than 80% of firms experiencing a detrimental effect on business performance.

Financial education charity, the **ifs School of Finance** is celebrating the milestone of teaching **100,000 Financial Capability** students.

The ifs School of Finance is a leading exponent of financial education and has achieved this feat in only five years.

HTI is organising two **Strategic Forum Discussions** in London.

'**Getting kids on the radar: from street to school**', in partnership with Aviva on 10 November (14.30-18.00). Guests will include Tim Loughton MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families.

'**Choices: employers' routes to market; students' routes to employment**', in partnership with PwC on 24 November (16.30-19.45). Contributors include Simon Waugh, Chief Executive, National Apprenticeship Service.

The fee is £95 +VAT

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